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Hunter's Warning

J.A. Bordeaux

I have a tale, all grim forebode
of one who sought the night.
He mounted, then in darkness rode
to work upon the height.
Control and power over all,
the essence of his quest.
The people he would hold in thrall.
Ill omen was his crest.
He found a cliff beside the sea.
A glowing circle cast,
with magic burnt the Sacred Tree
and drawing sword, stood fast.
The ocean swelled, and gale winds cried-
a storm of ice and chill.
Bright lightnings slashed and burned the sky
imposed by dark'ning will.
A gateway through the Other World
was opened by his hand,
For from the clouds a funnel swirled
and Bifrost's road did stand.
A raucous army then came down
and rode upon that coast.
Weird hoof beats rang upon the ground
from steeds who were as ghosts.
Just from the Hunt they had returned
to challenge fox, and deer.
And from the leader, one eye burned
and sighted down his spear.
'What magus honors not my name?',
a booming voice then cried.
'What fool does play this ill wrought game?
Best answer quick - or die.'
'My title matters not, O Lord.',
the sly tongued one did speak.
'We share the spirit of the sword-
your wisdom I would seek.'
'My secrets will I gladly give
to all who share my way-

but test ye must, to die or live-
one chance to go or stay.'

'Though death is not the thing I crave,
your questions will I bear.

And favor lacking, to the grave
and thralldom will I swear.'

'But I am learn'ed, wise and strong
so if your test surpassed
you must then swear before your throng
your power you will pass.'

The Hunt Lord scowled, and it was done,
then said with frosty breath:

'Unto me you will answer one-
what purpose does serve death?'

'My foes have often met their end.
I glory in the kill.

My way will use the death to bend
the people to my will.'

The Goddess Freyja then impart:

'What say you of the dove?

What use to you are things of heart?

Regard ye what of love?'

'I scorn all love, I favor wrath,
tis best left for the meek.

And peaceful ways cross not my path,
tis only for the weak.'

'War is my art, so answer this:',
spoke grim one handed Tyr.

'Affairs of state, when go amiss-
is honor in your sphere?'

'All honor I return to friends
and other Lords deserved.

I say again, foes meet their ends
when wrath has been incurred.'

'Unto us now, one more reply
before you hear our will.

of spells and power - magic high,
of what does this fulfill?

'To honor you, I would enshrine,

the world then I would take.
To snare, all shiftless peoples bind
with forces I would wake.'
All Asgard's dwellers, looking grim,
then nodded to this king.
Triumphant mien came over him-
his darkened soul did ring.
But Odin set his rage filled face-
the mages blood ran cold.
'Ye think that thou hast won our grace
with naked evil bold?'
'All death is but the way to birth
and peace is men's desire.
Our way is to renew the Earth-
despoiling not in ire.'
'This and the magics meant to heal
and guide on wisdom's path.
So this is why the powers wield-
you have incurred our wrath.'
'But go in sorrow - life we give,
along with this one curse-
That ever long as you shall live
your life now is reversed.'
'Harm with your magic, and you die
a death forever long.
Hurt with your guile, and you shall cry-
your way is twisted, wrong.'
They rode like leaves upon the wind.
Ensorcelled mage grew mad.
He wanders - never trust or friends.
Just woe, dark soul, nomad.
Pay heed, all seekers on the path
to shadow's knowledge earned.
To evil go, you gain the wrath
of Powers great and stern.

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